

High School Relationships for Diverse Learners

Studies demonstrate that education and skill practice are key to promoting healthy and mutually respectful behavior, regardless of a young person's abilities. It is understood that young people with disabilities are far more vulnerable to sexual abuse than are their peers, especially those with developmental disabilities. Sexual health education must, therefore, encompass knowledge and skills that describe and promote healthy relationships, and reduce the risk of sexual abuse. The *High School Relationships for Diverse Learners* series includes lessons on communication and conflict resolution, decision making, dating abuse and breaking up, the role of technology in healthy relationships, consent, and power in relationships.

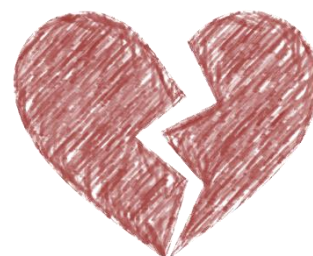
Communication, Conflict Resolution, and Healthy Relationships – This lesson teaches



communication techniques and conflict management skills to assist students in navigating all types of relationships including school, family, peers and romantic partners. Through a variety of activities including role play, modeling and discussion, this lesson raises students' awareness of how communication and conflict management skills affect relationship success.

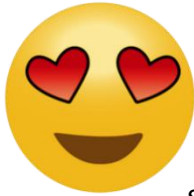
Decision Making ...Decide, Don't Slide – Making clear decisions is important for healthy relationship development. Young people often "slide" into romantic and sexual involvements, and those "slides" can carry significant risks including unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. This lesson will introduce a low-risk "deciding" approach to relationships. Students will learn how to create boundary statements, and how to apply the head, heart, body tool when making decisions.

Dating Violence & Breaking Up – This lesson explores the topic of breaking up – how to know when it is time, how to do it, and how to move forward after a breakup. Through real life scenarios, youth will learn to recognize unhealthy patterns and early warning signs of abuse. Students will work in small groups to brainstorm examples of how to "draw the line of respect". The goal of this lesson is to raise awareness, prevent, and take action against interpersonal violence.



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Healthy Relationships in a Technology Driven World – This lesson explores how digital technology influences honesty and authenticity in relationships. Students will discuss the realities and risks of sexting, learn how to set digital boundaries, and practice strategies to respond to pressure situations involving sexting.

Let's Talk About Consent – Consent is an important idea for young people to grasp, as they make choices about their relationships. This lesson provides opportunities for students to consider the complexities of consent in a variety of situations. Participants will practice using their critical thinking and decision-making skills.

CONSENT

Exploring Power & Control - Every relationship may have some imbalance of power, however, some power differentials are healthier than others are. In this lesson, students learn to recognize inequalities in relationships and determine if those inequalities also indicate an abuse of power.

***All lessons align with the National Sexuality Education Standards for Healthy Relationships for 9-12th grade students.**

***All lessons are 60 minutes.**

For additional information, or to schedule workshops, contact James McCombs at (773) 233-2900 or email jmccomb2@illinois.edu